

The Wellstreet Journal

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Los Alamos National Laboratory
Wellness Center and Positive Health Directions

June 1999

Summer's in Bloom and so are your Allergies

"Allergies are the most chronic common disease in America." Thirty-five million Americans suffer from Allergic Rhinitis and one in eleven visits to the doctor is for an allergy-related complaint.

Seasonal allergies occur at the same time each year and are restricted to the upper airway, which distinguishes them from colds that make you feel bad all over. If you suspect that you are suffering from allergies, work with your physician to determine your sensitivities and the best course of treatment.

The best first step in fighting allergies is to control your environment. Here are some useful tips:

- Keep humidity below 50%
- Prevent dust from accumulating – keep floors bare, damp mop and dust
- Consider using an air purifier
- Avoid going outside in the early morning on sunny/breezy days. This is the time of highest pollination for trees, grasses and ragweeds.
- Limit potential pet allergies
 - restrict pets to specific areas
 - limit exposure by having someone else groom
 - don't allow pets on your bed

For more information check out the video "Coping with Allergies", from the Wellness Center video lending library (see the web site for a complete listing of topics). Also contact the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) at 1-800-7-ASTHMA

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Everything that makes us sneeze isn't outdoors. The article *Scents and Sensitivities* (Environmental Health Perspectives, Volume 106, Number 12 December 1998) notes a "growing outcry from those who claim that exposure to some fragrances adversely affects their health." It has been estimated that 15-30% of the general population report some sensitivity to chemicals, including fragrances, and 4-6% report that chemical intolerance has a major impact on quality of life. A study in the March-April 1998 issue of Archives of Environmental Health found that certain fragrance fumes produced various combinations of sensory and respiratory irritation.

For those who tolerate and use fragrances remember that indoor airspace is shared. Be considerate of others when it comes to the use of products that contain fragrance. Other sites with information on healthy indoor environments: Environmental Health Information Service (EHIS) <http://ehis.niehs.nih.gov/> National Safety Council's Environmental Health Center: Air Quality <http://www.nsc.org/ehc.htm> Environmental Protection Agency Indoor Environments Division <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/>

Newsletter QUIZ?

Test your knowledge from the April 1999 Welcoa newsletter.

1. True or False Getting a second opinion for surgery or high risk medical treatments is a safety measure and standard medical practice?
2. Take-out leftovers should be thrown out if not eaten within ____ days (and only if the food was refrigerated within 2 hours of eating -- otherwise, toss!).
3. A _____ exercise routine three to four times a week improves people's health and well being!

Nutrition Month Survey Results

Participation in incentive programs and keeping records works! This past March the Wellness Center sponsored National Nutrition Month using the Colorful Choices incentive program. In response to the questions: *Do you feel Colorful Choices has helped you add more fruits and vegetables to your diet?* and *Do you expect that your overall eating pattern will improve as a result of your participation in the program?*, 89% of the 149 survey respondents said "YES". For information about ongoing and upcoming Wellness Center incentive programs (Wellness Quest, Walking Month, etc.), visit the web pages or call 7-7166.

The Wellstreet Journal is a quarterly publication of Positive Health Directions (PHD) (HR-1 & ESH-2) and the Wellness Center (ESH-2). Comments can be sent to wsj@lanl.gov or Marta Gentry Munger 667-7166 or Jessica Kisiel 665-4368. PHD http://www.hr.lanl.gov/html/positive_health/ Wellness Center <http://drambuie.lanl.gov/~wellness>

Stress Buster



Writing for Your Eyes Only

The next time you are dealing with a stressful event, sit down in a private place and write out your thoughts and feelings. Research has shown that the simple act of writing can help manage stress, reduce visits to the doctor, increase some indicators of a healthy immune system and improve well-being. In a recent study reported in the Journal of the American Medical Association and conducted at Stony Brook School of Medicine in New York, chronic asthma and rheumatoid arthritis patients were asked to write for 20 minutes on three consecutive days. The study participants were asked to write down their thoughts and feelings about the most stressful event they had ever experienced. Compared to a control group who did not perform the stressful event writing exercise, the writers had significantly fewer disease-related symptoms four months later.

So grab a blank book or sheet of paper, a comfortable pen and "get it in writing." Don't worry about style - this material is for your eyes only!

June Health Happenings Calendar

June...National Men's Health Week, June 14th -20th

National Men's Health Week was created to increase knowledge of men's health issues, especially early detection of illness through education and routine medical visits. Watch the Newsbulletin for daily tips during the week. The Wellness Center will have a limited supply of men's health booklets at no charge. The booklet is also available by calling toll-free 1-800-955-2002.

June 21-25th – Safety Days

June 22nd - Speaker Mike Marchev "Thank Goodness It's Today" TA-3 Main Auditorium

June 24th - Community Safety Fair Downtown 8AM-1:30PM

Safety Days Walks:

June 21st, 5:30PM, meet at Ice Rink

June 23rd, Noon, meet at Wellness Center

June 25th, 7:00AM, meet at Wellness Center

For more information on safety days events visit the web site at <http://www.lanl.gov/orgs/ism/days99.html>.

ESH-2 Skin Cancer Screenings

June 8th * 8:30-11:30AM * TA-53 Rosen Auditorium

June 9th * 10AM-Noon * TA-55 PF1 Auditorium

June 10th * 12:30-3:30PM * TA-16 (S-site) Bldg. 200 basement

June 14th-18th * 9AM-Noon * TA-3 SM 409 (Occupational Medicine Clinic)

For more information contact Lezlie Morris at 7-7890.

Summer Sand Volleyball League

Play begins June 7th * 4 person coed teams

Captains meeting June 3rd * Season end tournament

Call Michael Hopwood at the Wellness Center for more information, 667-7166.

Wellness Center Classes

Feldenkrais Method--How your body is meant to be--Fridays June 4th-25th, 12:05-1:00 PM

Fitness Boxing PM--Mondays and Wednesdays June 7th-30th, 6:30 - 7:15 PM

Men & Metabolism--Tuesday June 15th, 12:00-1:00 PM

Healthy Start: Before and During Pregnancy--Wednesdays June 9th-30th, 12:00-1:00 PM

In the Kitchen

This spicy marinated chicken dish, adapted from an *American Institute of Cancer Research* recipe, begins in the oven and finishes on the grill. This technique gives the chicken a great taste and texture, and minimizes potentially harmful substances from high heat grilling.

Jerk Chicken

1 cup diced onion; 3 green onions, chopped; 2 tsp. thyme leaves; 1 Tbs. coarsely chopped gingerroot; 2-4 habañero chile peppers; 1 Tbs. vegetable oil; 1 tsp. ground allspice; 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper; 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon; 1/4 tsp. freshly ground nutmeg; 1/2 tsp. salt; 2 whole chicken breasts, split and skinned

In a food processor or blender, combine the onion, scallion, thyme, ginger, chilies, oil, allspice, pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt. Process to a pulpy paste. Spread the paste liberally over the chicken breasts. Arrange the chicken on a plate. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator 2-3 hours, up to overnight. Preheat the oven to 300F. Place the chicken in a baking dish, cover and bake 30 minutes. Transfer chicken to grill and cook until it is cooked through, turning the pieces once. (about 10 minutes, depending on the size of the chicken breasts).

Serves 4. Per serving: 194 calories, 7 grams of fat

Nominations for Healthy Living

Nomination from Jackie Hurtle and Susan Terp, ESH-17

Richard Sturgeon has been losing weight for almost six months and has lost 70 pounds! He accomplished this by adopting a healthy diet and regular exercise program. He walks during his lunch hour and walks longer walks on the weekends.

Please send your nominations with a brief script to wsj@lanl.gov

Newsletter QUIZ Answers:

1. True

2. Two

3. Moderate